

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 22, 2004

Today, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the United States Attorney's Office (Western District of New York), and the New York State Police announced the results of "Operation Odd Couple," an eight-month joint investigation conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the New York State Police. This enforcement effort, which began in August of 2003, targeted a heroin trafficking group operating primarily in the Northeastern United States.

Working together, DEA and the New York State Police (NYSP) identified this organization's heroin supply route, which originated in New York City and was ultimately destined for Rochester, New York. Typically, the drugs would be transferred to Rochester via vehicles. Special Agents of the DEA Rochester Resident Office and NYSP Investigators became aware of this distribution network in August 2003. Local DEA Agents and NYSP Investigators targeted the "wholesale" heroin distributors who were utilizing vehicles outfitted with hidden compartments in order to transport the narcotics from New York City. Conversely, the traffickers would use vehicles equipped with hidden compartments (also known as "traps") to transport cash drug proceeds back to New York City.

On a daily basis, this organization delivered significant amounts of heroin to local "distributors," who would in turn provide the heroin to others for "street level" sale. Several of the organization's members are previously convicted felons. This criminal organization has had a devastating negative impact upon the City of Rochester and the surrounding region. In response, a close knit group of DEA Agents and NYSP Investigators worked tirelessly over an eight month period to dismantle this drug trafficking organization. Working together, Agents and Investigators have already seized or have identified for seizure heroin, money, residences and businesses.

Today, over 100 police officers, Investigators and Agents executed twelve arrest warrants and ten search warrants in the Rochester, New York area. There have thus been 17 arrests in Rochester, New York. In addition, approximately 300 grams of heroin and \$23,000 in U.S. currency, and five guns have been seized. The DEA Special Operations Division (SOD) and the U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of New York, coordinated this Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) initiative. Participating in the execution of these warrants were the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Randy Krahenbuhl, the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Tom Askey, the Rochester Police Department, under the direction of Police Chief Robert Duffy, the U.S. Marshal's Service, under the direction of Marshal Peter Lawrence, the Internal Revenue Service, under the direction of Anne Marie Coons, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter Smith and the National Guard.

For more information, please contact the DEA Rochester Resident Office at (585) 263-3180.